

merging the aesthetic of modern dance with the soulful energy of diverse cultures



sonia dawkins / PRISM DANCE THEATRE

MISSION Sonia Dawkins / PRISM Dance Theatre is a modern, multicultural dance company that will continuously explore new ways of artistically expressing the beauty of diversity. To this end, we will strive to enlighten and inspire audiences, educate the community about the many forms of modern and multi-cultural dance, and teach the next generation to perform and appreciate this vital art form.

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The Sonia Dawkins/PRISM Dance Theatre was established in 1994 to express the melding of modernism with multiculturalism, and skill with spontaneity. The choreography of Artistic Director Sonia Dawkins astonishes audiences with its freshness, power, and depth.

Ms. Dawkins presents us with a company of multi-ethnic dancers trained in classical ballet as well as movement techniques established by some of the masters of modern dance – Martha Graham, Lester Horton, and José Limon. She then infuses the exacting beauty of these disciplines with the texture and expressiveness of dance and music from around the world. The results are visually moving, emotionally compelling, and wide-ranging in style and effect.

Cultural expressions abound in Sonia Dawkins' choreography. She draws from her own Afro-American and Afro-Caribbean roots – especially the tradition of Jamaican folk dance – and she incorporates the Arabic, European, Jewish, and Asian cultures that she has studied intently. Among the influences on her various commissions are Buddhist philosophy, Persian dance, the Harlem Renaissance, American tap dance, classical mythology, and the sculptures of Michelangelo and Rodin.

Ms. Dawkins encourages company members and guest performers to contribute their own cultural knowledge and artistry to the creative process. Performances often feature live music, vocal accompaniment, and spoken text.

Despite the influences of tradition, Sonia Dawkins' choreography retains a strong contemporary edge that broadens the mind and blesses the eye. Springing from her belief that art can dramatically improve lives – especially those of children – Ms. Dawkins has built into her non-profit organization a deep commitment to training and educating the next generation of dancers and raising funds for children at risk.